THE NARRATIVE OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL SIR HENRY CLINTON, K. B.

[PRICE TWO SHILLINGS.]

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LIEUTENANT GENERAL

SIR HENRY CLINTON, K.B.

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RELATIVE TO HIS

CONDUCT

DURING

PART OF HIS COMMAND OF THE KING'S TROOPS

IN

NORTH AMERICA;

Particularly to that which respects the unfortunate Issue of the Campaign in 1781.

WITH AN

APPENDIX,

CONTAINING

COPIES and EXTRACTS of those Parts of his Correspondence with

LORD GEORGE GERMAIN,

EARL CORNWALLIS,

REAR ADMIRAL GRAVES, &c.

Which are referred to therein.

SIXTH EDITION.

LONDON:

Printed for J. DEBRETT (Successor to Mr. ALMON) opposite Burlington-house, Piccadilly, 1783.

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MVSEVM BRITANNICVM

THE NARRATIVE OF LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR HENRY CLINTON, &c.

BEING conſcious, that during my command in North America, my whole conduct was actuated by the moſt ardent zeal for the King's ſervice, and the intereſts of the public, I was exceedingly mortified, when I returned to England, after a ſervice of ſeven years in that country, to find that erroneous opinions had gone forth reſpecting it; and that many perſons had, in conſequence, admitted impreſſions to my preju-

dice. Anxious, therefore, to explain what had been misinterpreted or misrepresented, (as indeed might well be expected, from the publication of Lord C.'s letter of the 20th of October, without being accompanied by my answer to it) I had proposed taking an opportunity, in the House of Commons, of saying a few words on such parts of my conduct as seemed not to be sufficiently understood: and I flatter myself I should have been able to make it appear, that I acted up to the utmost of my powers, from the beginning to the end of my command; and that none of the misfortunes of the very unfortunate campaign of 1781 can, with the smallest degree of justice, be imputed to me.

But I arrived here so late in the session, that I was advised to defer it; and it was judged that the gracious reception I had just met with from my Sovereign rendered an immediate explanation unnecessary. I was

not, however, apprifed to what degree the public prejudice had been excited againſt me, elſe I ſhould probably have been induced to have taken an earlier opportunity of offering to Parliament what I have to ſay on the ſubject. But the late change in public affairs, furniſhing ſo much more important matter for their deliberation, deprived me of the opportunity I thought I ſhould have had: and, as by the preſent receſs it is probable that I may not be able to execute my intentions before a late period, when perhaps peculiar circumſtances might force me through delicacy to decline it, I beg leave to lay before the public the following plain Narrative, which will, I truſt, remove prejudice and error.

I have much to regret that, when this buſineſs was diſcuſſed in the Houſe of Lords laſt ſeſſion of Parliament, the whole of my correſpondence, with the late American Miniſter, Lieutenant General Earl Corn-

wallis, and the Admirals commanding on the Weſt-India and American ſtations, was not produced, or at leaſt ſuch parts thereof as, being neceſſary to explain my conduct, might have appeared conſiſtently with ſtate policy. Becauſe the letters which compoſe that correſpondence, being written to the moment as events happened, are certainly the moſt faithful records of my actions and intentions; and are conſequently the cleareſt, faireſt, and moſt unexceptionable teſtimonies I can adduce in their ſupport. I hope, therefore, I ſhall ſtand exculpated from the neceſſity of the caſe, for any impropriety there may be in my annexing hereto ſuch of them as I may judge moſt requiſite for that purpoſe. Three of them indeed will, I preſume, be found very material, (Appendix, No. IX.) as they contain my anſwers and obſervations upon Lord Cornwallis's letters of the 20th of October and 2d of December, on the ſubject of

the unfortunate concluſion of the laſt campaign in the Cheſapeak; —— which latter I am ſorry to obſerve, were given to the public, while mine in anſwer were withheld from it; — I hope without deſign.

Although I never dared promiſe myſelf that any exertions of mine, with my very reduced force (nearly one-third leſs than that of my predeceſſor) could bring the war to a happy concluſion; yet I confeſs that the campaign of 1781 terminated very differently from what I once flattered myſelf it would; as may appear, by the ſubjoined extracts of letters, written in the beginning of that year, * and which were tranſ-

* "I am moſt exceedingly concerned, my Lord, at the very unfortunate affair of the 17th of January, (Cowpen's,) I confeſs I dread the conſequences. But my hope is, as it ever will be, in your Lordſhip's abilities and exertions. I have much to lament, that Brigadier-general Arnold's projected move in favour of your Lordſhip's

transmitted to the Minister. I was led, however, into these hopes, more by the apparent distresses of the enemy than any material successes we had met with.

The plan I had formed for the campaign of 1781, (upon the expectation of a reinforcement

Lordship's operations will have been stopt by the appearance of the French ships. Discontent runs high in Connecticut, &c. In short, my Lord, there seems little wanting to give a mortal stab to rebellion, but a proper reinforcement and a permanent superiority at sea for the next campaign; without which any enterprize depending on water movements must certainly run great risk. Until Colonel Bruce arrives, I am uncertain what reinforcements are intended for this army. The Minister has however assured me, that every possible exertion will be made." — Letter from Sir Henry Clinton to Lord Cornwallis, March 5, 1781.

"I cannot sufficiently express my extreme joy at reading Washington's letter. It is such a description of distress, as may serve to convince, that with a tolerable reinforcement from Europe, to enable your Excellency to determine on an offensive campaign, the year 1781

may

forcement from Europe — from the Weſt-Indies — and from the Southward (after operation ſhould ceaſe in that quarter) — added to what I might be able to ſpare at the time from the ſmall force under my immediate command at New-York, was calculated to make a fair and ſolid effort in favour of our friends — in a diſtrict where I had ſome reaſon to believe they were numerous and hearty; and where I judged it might be made with little danger, even from a temporary naval ſuperiority of the enemy. This plan had been ſuggeſted to the Miniſter in the year 1780, and more particularly explained to him in 1781; (Appendix, No. XI.) notwithſtanding which a preference was given to another, (Appendix, No. I.) which ſeemed to be forced

(Appendix,

may probably prove the glorious period to your command in America, by putting an end to the rebellion."— Letter from Major-general Phillips to Sir H. Clinton, Portſmouth, Virginia, April 16, 1781.

(Appendix, No. II.) upon me by Lord Cornwallis's quitting the Carolinas, where I had left him in command, and marching into Virginia; a meaſure, I muſt ſay, determined upon without my approbation, and very contrary to my wiſhes and intentions. The Miniſter directed me to ſupport Lord Cornwallis and ſolid operation in Virginia; the danger of which, without a covering fleet, I had conſtantly repreſented to him. He repeatedly and poſitively promiſed me a covering fleet; * and when the Admiral

* Extracts from Lord George Germain's letters to Sir Henry Clinton:

April 4, 1781. "The lateneſs of the ſeaſon will, I imagine, prevent Monſ. De Graſſe's undertaking any thing againſt the King's poſſeſſions in the Weſt-Indies. But it is probable, as ſoon as he has thrown ſupplies into the ſeveral iſlands, he will proceed to North America, and join the French forces at Rhode-Iſland, and endeavour to revive the expiring cauſe of rebellion. But as Sir

Admiral arrived with the naval reinforcement from the Weſt-Indies, he was clearly of

Sir George Rodney's force is little inferior to his, and he will be watchful of his motions, I am not apprehenſive he will give him time to do you any material injury before he comes to your ſuccour."

May 2, 1781. "And as Sir George Rodney will bring you three more regiments from the Leeward Iſlands before the hurricane months, the augmentation of your force muſt, I ſhould think, be equal to the utmoſt of your wiſhes.

July 7, 1781. "The arrival of the reinforcement will, I hope, enable you to proceed immediately in the execution of your purpoſe, without waiting for the three regiments from the Weſt Indies; for I do not expect they will join you before the ſeaſon for offenſive operations there is over; when, I have reaſon to believe, the French fleet will puſh for North America, and Sir George Rodney will certainly follow them, to prevent them from giving you any interruption in your operations.

July 14, 1781. "The purpoſe of the enemy was long known here, and Sir George Rodney has been appriſed of it, and will certainly not loſe ſight of Monſ.

of opinion himſelf, and of courſe convinced me, that he had brought that covering fleet. (Appendix, No. III.) Therefore, as Admiral Graves's ſquadron was acknowledged to be ſuperior to that under Monſieur de Barras, I could

De Graſſe. The very proper ſtep you took of tranſmitting him copies of the letters you had intercepted, muſt confirm him in the reſolution he had taken in conſequence of the former intelligence. But as in a matter of ſo great moment, no precaution ſhould be omitted, or poſſible contingency unguarded againſt, extracts of the intercepted letters will be ſent to him from hence, and preciſe inſtructions given to him to proceed directly to North America, whenever Monſ. De Graſſe quits the Lewards Iſlands."

July 24, 1781. "And I truſt, that as Sir George Rodney knows De Graſſe's deſtination, and the French acknowledge his ſhips ſail better than theirs, that he will get before him, and be in readineſs to receive him when he comes upon the coaſt."

September 25, 1781. "I truſt, before the end of Auguſt, Sir Samuel Hood will have been with you, and that after his junction with Admiral Graves our ſuperiority at ſea will be preſerved."

I could not but ſuppoſe that the arrival of Admiral Digby (hourly expected) would give us a moſt deciſive naval ſuperiority.—And here, perhaps, it may not be improper to remark, that though the Miniſter directs me, by his letters of the 2d of May, and 6th of June, to adopt ſolid operation in Virginia, he ſignifies to me his Majeſty's approbation of my own plan, in a ſubſequent letter of the 14th of July, telling me at the ſame time, that "he has not the leaſt doubt Lord "Cornwallis will have fully ſeen the rea-"ſonableneſs of it, and has executed it with "his wonted ardor, intrepidity, and ſuc-"ceſs."

Under theſe circumſtances, and with theſe aſſurances, I never could have the moſt diſtant idea that Mr. Waſhington had the leaſt hopes of a ſuperior French fleet in the Cheſapeak; and I conſequently never could ſuppoſe that he would venture to go there. But if he ſhould, I was ſatisfied from the reaſons already

ſtated, that I ſhould be able to meet him there with every advantage on my ſide, by having the command of the waters of that bay — without which he could not poſſibly feed his army. This opinion has been alſo ſince confirmed by a letter from him to Count De Graſſe, dated 26th of September, 1781, (No. IV. Appendix) wherein he tells him, if he quits the Cheſapeak, the enemy will certainly get poſſeſſion of it, and he muſt diſband his army.

Had my correſpondence been produced, it would have appeared from it, and the returns accompanying it, that inſtead of ſeventeen, twenty, nay twenty-four thouſand men, which it has been reported I had at New York, (after the very ample reinforcements, as the Miniſter acknowledges, (No. V. Appendix) which I had ſent to the ſouthward) I had not 12,000 effectives, and of theſe not above 9300 fit for duty, regulars and Provincials. But had I had

twice

twice that number, I do not know that, after leaving ſufficient garriſons in the iſlands and poſts depending (which it is admitted by all would take 6000) I could, as has been inſinuated, have prevented the junction between Monſ. Rochambeau and General Waſhington, which was made in the highlands, at leaſt 50 miles from me; or that I could have made any direct move againſt their army when joined (conſiſting then of at leaſt 11,000 men, excluſive of militia, aſſembled on either ſide the Hudſon) with any proſpect of ſolid advantage from it. Or if I had as many reaſons to believe that Mr. Waſhington would move his army into Virginia without a covering French fleet, as I had to think he would not; I could not have prevented his paſſing the Hudſon under cover of his forts at Verplanks and Stoney Points. Nor (ſuppoſing I had boats properly manned) would it have been adviſeable to have landed at Elizabeth town,

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in the face of works which he might eaſily have occupied (as they were only ſeven miles from his camp at Chatham) without ſubjecting my army to be beat, *en detail*. Nor could I, when informed of his march towards the Delaware, have paſſed an army in time to have made any impreſſion upon him before he croſſed that river. But with my reduced force, any attempt of the fort would have been madneſs and folly in the extreme.

With what might poſſibly be ſpared from ſuch a force, nothing could be attempted except againſt detachments from Mr. Waſhington's army, or (when reinforced in a ſmall degree) againſt ſuch of its diſtant magazines as might occaſionally happen to be unguarded. Two of the latter offered, one againſt Philadelphia, which I certainly ſhould have attempted in July, had Lord Cornwallis ſpared me any part of 3000 men; but as his Lordſhip ſeemed to think he could

could not hold the ſtations we both thought eligible, if he ſpared me any part of the force with him, I was obliged to relinquiſh this deſign. The other, much more important, was againſt Rhode Iſland. I had diſcovered by intercepted letters from all the French Admirals and Generals, that Count Rochambeau's army had marched from Rhode Iſland to join Mr. Waſhington at the White Plains; that their battering train and ſtores for ſiege were left at Providence under little more than a militia guard; and that their fleet remained in Rhode Iſland harbour with orders, as ſoon as repaired, to retire to Boſton for ſecurity. By private information, which I had at that time, I found alſo that the works at Rhode Iſland were in a great meaſure diſmantled, and had only a few invalids and militia to guard them, and that they were both there and at Providence under great apprehenſions of a viſit from us. From other motives as well as my own knowledge of theſe poſts, I had the ſtrongeſt

reaſon

reaſon to expect the fulleſt ſucceſs to an attempt againſt them, and I therefore immediately propoſed to Admiral Graves a joint expedition for that purpoſe; which he readily conſented to. It was accordingly agreed between us, that it ſhould be undertaken as ſoon as he could aſſemble his fleet, and a ſmall reinforcement (which I hourly expected) ſhould arrive from Europe. The reinforcement joined me on the 11th of Auguſt, and the Admiral (who had ſailed on a cruiſe) having returned to the coaſt on the 16th, I immediately renewed my propoſal, (Appendix, No. VI.) The Admiral informed me in anſwer, that he was under the neceſſity of ſending the Robuſte to the yard to be be refitted, and that he ſhould take the opportunity while that was doing of ſhifting a maſt or two in the Prudente; and when thoſe repairs were accompliſhed, he would give me timely notice, (Appendix, No. VII.) The ſhips were not ready on the 28th; Sir Samuel Hood, however, arriving

on that day, I immediately ordered the troops to be embarked; and going to the Admirals on Long Iſland, I propoſed to them that the expedition ſhould inſtantly take place: but receiving intelligence that evening that Monſieur de Barras had ſailed on the 25th, it was of courſe ſtopped. Thus, to the Admirals great mortification and my own, was loſt an opportunity of making the moſt important attempt that had offered the whole war. And early in September, to my great ſurpriſe, (for I ſtill conſidered our fleet as ſuperior) hearing that Mr. Waſhington was decidedly marching to the ſouthward, I called a council of all the general officers, who unanimouſly concurred with me in opinion, that the only way to ſuccour Earl Cornwallis was to go to him in the Cheſapeak.

Although I had every reaſon to diſapprove of Earl Cornwallis's march into Virginia, without conſulting me, (at the riſk of en-

gaging me in dangerous operations, for which I was not prepared) yet, as I ſuppoſed he acted with at leaſt the approbation of the Miniſter, I left him as free as air, when he arrived there, to plan and execute according to his diſcretion; only recommending to him, in caſe he had none of his own, the plan I had offered to the Miniſter; which, notwithſtanding the opinion given in the letter of July 14, before quoted,* I did not, however, find his Lordſhip the leaſt inclined to adopt.

* Extract from Lord George Germain's letter to Sir Henry Clinton, July 14, 1781. — "It is with the moſt unfeigned pleaſure I obey his Majeſty's commands, in expreſſing to you his royal approbation of the plan you have adopted for proſecuting the war in the provinces ſouth of the Delaware, and of the ſuccours you have furniſhed, and the inſtructions you have given for carrying it into execution. The copies of the very important correſpondence which ſo fortunately fell into your hands, (incloſed in your diſpatch) ſhew the rebel affairs to be almoſt deſperate, and that nothing but the ſucceſs

adopt. And that letter, which I did not receive till September, found me deeply and dangerouſly engaged in the operation he had forced me into.

And here, perhaps, it may be proper to give the reaſons which induced me to recommend

ceſs of ſome extraordinary enterpriſe can give vigour and activity to their cauſe; and I confeſs I am well pleaſed that they have fixed upon New York as the object to be attempted, as I have not the leaſt doubt but that the troops you had remaining with you, after the ample reinforcements you ſo judiciouſly ſent to the Cheſapeak, would be fully ſufficient, under your command, to repel any force the enemy could bring againſt you. I cannot cloſe this letter, without repeating to you the very great ſatisfaction your diſpatch has given me; and my moſt entire and hearty coincidence with you in the plan you have propoſed to Lord Cornwallis, for diſtreſſing the rebels, and recovering the ſouthern provinces to the King's obedience. And as his Lordſhip, when he received your letters of the 8th and 11th of June, will have fully ſeen the reaſonableneſs of it, I have not the leaſt doubt but his Lordſhip has executed it with his wonted ardor, intrepidity, and ſucceſs."

mend to Lord Cornwallis to ſecure a naval ſtation for large ſhips, if one could be found that was capable of being fortified and maintained againſt a temporary ſuperiority of the enemy at ſea, agreeable to the inſtructions which I had before given to General Phillips, and which were of courſe to be now conſidered as ſuch to his Lordſhip, (Appendix, No. X.)

Although I ought not to have apprehended that the enemy could have had a ſuperiority at ſea, after the aſſurances I had received from the Miniſter, I yet always wiſhed to guard againſt even a poſſibility of it. Finding, therefore, by Lord Cornwallis's letters, that on his arrival in the Cheſapeak, he had no plan of his own to propoſe, and that he did not incline to follow the one I had offered to his conſideration, I recommended the taking a reſpectable defenſive ſtation either at Williamſburg, or York (the latter of which his

Lordſhip had informed me in a letter, dated 26th of May, he was inclined, from the reports which had been made to him, to think well of as a naval ſtation and place of arms) and left his Lordſhip at liberty to keep all the troops he had in Virginia, amounting to about ſeven thouſand men. But thinking that he might well ſpare three thouſand, I deſired he would keep all that were neceſſary for a reſpectable defenſive, and deſultory water movements, and ſend me of three thouſand men all he could. His Lordſhip miſconceiving my intentions, (as will, I truſt, be manifeſt to whoever reads our correſpondence) and conſidering my call for three thouſand men as unconditional, tells me that he could not, with the remainder, keep York and Glouceſter; and that he ſhould, therefore, repaſs James-river, and go to the ſtation at Portſmouth; which reſolution, I confeſs, ſurpriſed me, as

as he had a little before, in the letter above quoted, repreſented that poſt as unhealthy, and requiring an army to defend it. On receipt of his Lordſhip's letter, I immediately conſulted the Admiral, who was of opinion, that a naval ſtation for large ſhips was abſolutely neceſſary, and recommended Hampton-road. Therefore, in my letter of the 11th of July, I directed his Lordſhip to examine and fortify Old Point Comfort, which the Admiral and I thought would cover that road, and in which there had been a fort for that purpoſe for fifty years, though probably then in ruins. But his Lordſhip informing me, in his letter of the 27th of July, that it was the opinion of the captains of the navy, the engineers, and himſelf, that any works erected on Old Point Comfort, "might "be eaſily deſtroyed by a fleet, and would "not anſwer the purpoſe; and that "therefore, according to the ſpirit of my "orders,

"orders, he ſhould ſeize York and Glou-
"ceſter, as the only harbour in which he
"could hope to be able to give effectual pro-
"tection to line of battle ſhips;" I ſuppoſed his Lordſhip had entirely approved of thoſe poſts; and that after examining them with the officers of the King's ſhips and his engineer, he would let me know if he ſhould ſee reaſon to alter his opinion; and conſequently I did not object to the choice he had made; nor indeed had I ever cauſe to do ſo, before I ſaw his letter of the 11th of October, which I did not receive until the 16th, the day before he offered to capitulate, when for the firſt time I found his Lordſhip thought unfavourably of them. For on the 16th of Auguſt, his Lordſhip told me that he ſhould apply to the Commodore for a ſhip to ſend me a ſtate of things at York, and bring him back my commands; by which I was of courſe to underſtand that his Lordſhip would ſend me his own and the Commodore's opi-

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nion of York and Glouceſter, after his engineer had made a moſt exact ſurvey, which he told me he was employed in, and of which I expected a copy, as his Lordſhip had before ſent me of the one taken of Old Point Comfort. But not receiving theſe from his Lordſhip, I naturally concluded that the poſt of York and Glouceſter was ſuch as his Lordſhip and the Commodore approved; eſpecially, as his Lordſhip, in his letter of the 22d of Auguſt, was pleaſed to ſay, "the "engineer has finiſhed his ſurvey and exa- "mination of this place, (York) and has "propoſed his plan for fortifying it; which "appearing judicious, I have approved, and "directed to be executed." And in the ſame letter it was farther implied, that through the exertion of the troops, the works would probably be tolerably complete in about ſix weeks from that period: and from his ſaying alſo in the ſame letter, "I will not venture to

"take

" take any ſtep that might retard the eſta-
" bliſhing this poſt. But I requeſt that your
" Excellency will pleaſe to decide whether
" it is moſt important for your plans, that a
" detachment of a thouſand or twelve hun-
" dred men (which I think I can ſpare from
" every other purpoſe but that of labour)
" ſhould be ſent to you from hence, or that the
" whole of the troops here ſhould continue
" to be employed in expediting the works,")
I naturally concluded that his Lordſhip had not only ſufficient to complete his works by the time he mentioned, but that he could ſpare that number from the defence of them afterwards. His Lordſhip's letter of the 29th of September moreover told me, " I have no
" doubt, if relief arrives in any reaſonable
" time, that both York and Glouceſter will
" be in poſſeſſion of his Majeſty's troops ;"
and again, that of the 3d of October, " My
" works are in a better ſtate of defence than

"we had reaſon to hope." In ſhort, I think his Lordſhip appears to have implied in all his letters, (except that of the 17th of September, the day he heard from Lieutenant Conway of the navy, that Monſ. De Graſſe, by the junction of Monſieur de Barras, had thirty-five or thirty-ſix ſail of the line) that he could hold out as long as his proviſions laſted — which was, by his Lordſhip's own calculation, to the end of October at leaſt.

From all theſe circumſtances, I had flattered myſelf, that the works at York would have been tolerably complete by the 9th of October, the day Mr. Waſhington opened his batteries againſt them: and from the opinion given me by certain officers of rank, who had lately come from Lord Cornwallis at York, I was under no apprehenſions for his Lordſhip before the latter end of that month; as I could not conceive that the enemy could poſſibly bring againſt him

ſuch

ſuch a powerful battering train as would demoliſh his defences (ſuch as I had reaſon to hope they would be) in ſo ſhort a ſpace of time as nine or ten days.

Although I never gave Lord Cornwallis aſſurances of the exertions of the navy before my letter of the 24th of September, when I did it in conſequence of a council of war, compoſed of flag and general officers; I certainly never gave his Lordſhip the leaſt reaſon to ſuppoſe they would not be made; as I always took it for granted, before Admiral Graves's letter to me of the 9th of September, that our fleet was ſuperior to that of the enemy. Nor, indeed, did I know before I received Lord Cornwallis's letter of the 17th, (which was not until the 23d of September) that the enemy had thirty-ſix ſail of the line, or that Monſieur de Barras had not already joined Monſieur de Graſſe before the action of the 5th of September. But even againſt this ſuperiority, great as it was, the Admirals

were clearly of opinion, that a joint attempt ſhould be made by us to ſuccour the fleet and army in the Cheſapeak. I certainly, therefore, never could have hinted to his Lordſhip that their exertions would not be made.

The whole of this matter then may, I think, be ſummed up as follows:

Lord Cornwallis's march into Virginia, without conſulting his Commander in Chief, forced us into ſolid operation in that province. Being there, as his Lordſhip could not ſubſiſt his army without having a place of arms to cover his magazines, &c. &c. &c. it became abſolutely neceſſary to fix on ſome healthy and reſpectable ſtation, that could be made ſecure againſt a tempory ſuperiority of the enemy at ſea; and York and Glouceſter ſeem to have been originally thought of by Lord Cornwallis, and approved by me for that purpoſe. But by his Lordſhip's miſconceiving my orders, he quitted the Neck of York, and conſequenly

relin-

relinquiſhed every idea of occupying thoſe poſts ſoon afterwards, the Admiral thinking a naval ſtation for large ſhips abſolutely neceſſary, and recommending Hampton Road, I directed Lord Cornwallis to examine and fortify Old Point Comfort in James River; but his Lordſhip not approving of that ſtation, made choice of York and Glouceſter.

I perfectly agree with Lord Cornwallis, that to abandon his poſts, after he had once fixed himſelf, (although by doing ſo he might ſave part of his army) would have been diſgraceful, nay, perhaps fatal to our future proſpects of eſtabliſhment in the Cheſapeak, when ſuch a meaſure ſhould be authoriſed by a covering fleet. But even that misfortune, great as it may be repreſented, would have been preferable to the one which happened; and therefore I told his Lordſhip, in a converſation I had with him before I ſent his letter of the 20th of October to be printed at New York, I had conceived

hopes

hopes, that between the time of the French fleet's arriving in the Cheſapeak, and his receiving information from me that Sir Samuel Hood had joined Mr. Graves, which was not until the 13th of September, or between that time and the junction of Mr. Waſhington with the Marquis De la Fayette, when his Lordſhip heard from Lieutenant Conway of the navy, that the enemy were thirty-ſix ſail of the line, he would have tried to eſcape with part of his army to the ſouthward; a ſtep which certainly would have been juſtifiable, although in the converſation alluded to, his Lordſhip did not ſeem to think it would, unleſs I had given him aſſurances that the navy could not attempt to ſuccour him; which aſſurances, however, I certainly could not poſſibly have given him.

If, therefore, Lord Cornwallis's letter of the 20th of October, giving an account of the unfortunate concluſion of the campaign, by the ſurrender of York town, (Appendix,

No.

No. VIII.) could ever have been underſtood to imply that the poſts of York and Glouceſter were not his Lordſhip's own choice, in preference to Old Point Comfort, which I had recommended to him; or that I had ever received information from his Lordſhip, that the ground at either was unfavourable, till the day before he had offered to capitulate; or that I had ever given him any aſſurances of the exertions of the navy, before my letter to him of the 24th of September, which he acknowledges he did not receive till the 29th; or that any aſſurances whatſoever given by me could have prevented his attacking the Marquis De la Fayette before Mr. Waſhington joined that General, which was on the 27th of September; I am perſuaded it will appear that thoſe implications are not founded on any orders I gave his Lordſhip, and cannot be ſupported by any part of our correſpondence. And as I took an opportunity of telling his Lordſhip the

ſame,

ſame, in a letter I ſent him before he ſailed from New-York, dated the 2d and 10th of December (which letter, however, did not appear when this part of our correſpondence was produced before the Houſe of Lords) I cannot doubt his Lordſhip is convinced that what I therein aſſerted is right.

Lord Cornwallis was pleaſed to tell me that his letter of the 20th of October was written under great agitation of mind, and in a great hurry. No man could poſſibly feel for his Lordſhip, and his dreadful ſituation, more than I did. And I will venture to ſay, no man could be more anxious, or would have gone greater lengths to ſuccour him. Nor will this, I truſt, be doubted, when it is recollected that the propoſal firſt came from me for embarking ſix thouſand men for that purpoſe on board an inferior fleet of twenty-ſeven ſail of the line, including two fifties, to thirty-ſix; and thereby putting the fate

of the American war on the joint exertions of the fleet and army, to relieve that noble Lord and his gallant corps.

I have to lament that theſe exertions could not have been made in time. All the Admirals ſeemed of opinion at the Council of War of the 24th September, that there was every reaſon to hope that the fleet would be ready to ſail on the 5th of October. The troops intended for the expedition had been for ſome time in readineſs to embark, and did actually do ſo early in October. It ſeemed alſo to be the general opinion of the Admirals, that the enemy, although ſuperior in number, could not obſtruct the channel to York-river, ſo as to prevent the paſſage of our fleet, much leſs both paſſages of the Cheſapeak. Could the troops, which embarked under my immediate command, have been put on ſhore on the Glouceſter ſide, a junction with the part of Lord Cornallis's corps on that ſide

was eaſy: but if they had been put on ſhore, even in James River, although a junction with his Lordſhip in York would have been ſcarcely practicable, it might have been made in ſome other part; or at leaſt ſuch diverſions might have been made by the troops under my command as might have ſaved part of his Lordſhip's corps.

I muſt, therefore, repeat that I lament, and ever ſhall, that thoſe exertions could not have been made in time. Becauſe, from the profeſſional merit of the Admirals who were to conduct us, and from the zeal which appeared ſo conſpicuous when I propoſed the move to them; and which, from their example was communicated to all ranks in the fleet; and with which, it is to be preſumed, thoſe of the army kept fully equal pace; I have every reaſon to think we ſhould have had moſt complete ſucceſs.

But

But at the ſame time that truth compels me to impute our misfortunes ultimately to the want of a covering fleet in the Cheſapeak, I think it right to declare, that, as a land officer, I do not feel myſelf a competent judge of the propriety and practicability or naval operations. Nor can I, as a ſervant of the State, entruſted with an important, but partial command, preſume to enter into the counſels of Miniſters; who, from a more elevated ſtation, ſurvey and balance the whole ſyſtem of the campaign, and the general ſafety and welfare of the empire.*

* "I am, however, aware of the difficulties Adminiſtration muſt neceſſarily be expoſed to, from the variety of important matters which demand its attention. And far be it from me, my Lord, to impute the delays I have experienced to any of the King's Miniſters; but I cannot avoid lamenting that they do happen, and I tremble for the fatal conſequences which may poſſibly ſome time or other enſue.—Sir Henry Clinton's letter to Lord George Germain, dated April 30, 1781.

Upon the whole, I am perſuaded, that had I been left to my own plans, and a proper confidence had been earlier repoſed in me, the campaign of 1781 would not probably have ended unfortunately. But though that apparent want of confidence was at laſt removed,* and the fulleſt approbation I could wiſh

* "The uneaſineſs you expreſs on a certain occaſion, muſt have ceaſed long before this reaches you, and, I truſt, in full time to prevent your reſigning the command to Earl Cornwallis. The meſſage I ſent you by Lieutenant-colonel Bruce was taken in writing, to avoid any miſtakes: for, as I was conſcious of your having every reaſon to be ſatisfied with the protection ſhewn to you by the King, and with the conſtant deſire of his Miniſters to give you all poſſible ſupport, I could not help regretting that there ſhould have been the leaſt appearance of that want of confidence between us, which might prejudice the public ſervice. Your explanation upon that ſubject is perfectly ſatisfactory; and you may depend upon finding every attention on my part to thoſe requiſitions which you may have occaſion to make. The variety of ſervices now carrying on in different parts of

wiſh given to the operations I had projected, my knowledge of the change happened too late to extricate me from the conſequences of Lord Cornwallis's ill-fated march into Virginia, and the orders they had probably occaſioned. Foreſeeing many of the evils which would reſult from this fatal move the inſtant I heard of it, I immediately at the time communicated my apprehenſions to the American Miniſter. (Appendix, No. XII.) And as my letter to him of the 18th of July, 1781, ſpeaks very fully on this and other matters, of which I fear the public has been hitherto equally miſinformed, I ſhall take the liberty to conclude this Narrative with the following extract from it: (Appendix, No. XIII.)

"I can

the world muſt account for the diſappointments you ſometimes ſuffer. But you may reſt aſſured, that every department of Government is anxious to furniſh you with the moſt effectual means of carrying on the war with honour to yourſelf, and with advantage to the State. — Extract from Lord George Germain's Letter to Sir Henry Clinton, dated July 7th, 1781.

"I can ſay little more to your Lordſhip's ſanguine hopes of the ſpeedy reduction of the ſouthern provinces, than to lament that the preſent ſtate of the war there does not altogether promiſe ſo flattering an event. Many untoward incidents, of which your Lordſhip was not appriſed, have thrown us too far back to be able to recover very ſoon, even what we have lately loſt there. For if (as I have often before ſuggeſted) the good-will of the inhabitants is abſolutely requiſite to retain a country, after we have conquered it; I fear it will be ſome time before we can recover the confidence of thoſe in Carolina, as their paſt ſufferings will of courſe make them cautious of publicly forwarding the King's intereſts before there is the ſtrongeſt certainty of his army being in a condition to ſupport them. I ſhall, therefore, moſt cordially join with your Lordſhip, in condemning the bad policy of taking poſſeſſion of places at one time, and abandoning

doning them at another; and in the opinion that the war ſhould be conducted upon a permanent and ſettled plan of conqueſt, by ſecuring and preſerving what has been recovered. But if theſe maxims have been, on any occaſion, deviated from, in the juſt progreſs of the war; I muſt, in juſtice to myſelf declare, that it has never been warranted by my orders, except, only in the caſe of Rhode-iſland. This, I doubt not, will appear from the inſtructions I gave to General Leſlie, and the other General Officers, whom I ſent on expeditions to the Cheſapeak. For if Lord Cornwallis made a deſultory move into North Carolina, and, without a force ſufficient to protect, or proviſions to ſupport them, invited by proclamation, the Loyaliſts to join him, and afterwards found it neceſſary to quit the friendly diſtricts of that province, before he could have time to give them a fair trial, I am perſuaded your Lordſhip will acknowledge

he did not act under my inſtructions;—nor were his Lordſhip's retreat to Wilmington, and ſubſequent move from thence to Virginia, in conſequence of my orders; on the contrary, as I foreſaw all the unhappy conſequences of them, I ſhould certainly have endeavoured to have ſtopt him, could I have known his intentions in proper time. But though his Lordſhip's movements, (which it muſt be confeſſed have been as rapid as your Lordſhip expected) have not to my ſincere concern been ſucceſsfully deciſive; I am convinced he is, as I hope we all are, impreſſed with the abſolute neceſſity of vigorous exertions in the ſervice of his country at the preſent criſis. If mine, however, have not been equal to my inclinations, I have little doubt they will be found to be at leaſt equal to my powers.

" I ſhall now, my Lord beg leave to conclude with the ſtrongeſt aſſurances, that no man can be more fervently deſirous than I

am

am to ſee an honourable end put to this moſt burthenſome war; and if I remain in the command, that no endeavours of mine ſhall be wanting to execute, in the fulleſt manner, the King's pleaſure and commands. Of the 10,000 men I ſolicited, only 4000 were even promiſed; and no portion of theſe, except a few recruits, has yet joined this part of the army. Your Lordſhip's laſt letters, however, give me hopes, that three Britiſh battalions and two thouſand ſix hundred German troops may be immediately expected. If all theſe arrive, I ſhall then be able, at a proper ſeaſon, to reinforce the Cheſapeak corps very conſiderably; and if a reinforcement does not likewiſe come to the French armament already here, ſuch operations may be carried on as may perhaps produce ſome advantages in the courſe of the Winter. But if our reinforcement does not arrive, and the French ſhould receive theirs, I think we ſhall have every thing to apprehend.

Before I close, however, I beg leave to say a word or two in explanation of two observations, in the Commissioners of Accounts Seventh Report; in order to obviate any implied censure, they may be supposed to point against me as Commander in Chief of the army in North America.

The Commissioners are pleased to say, "It "appears that the number of the forces de- "creased every year, from 1778, but the "issue for the extraordinary services of that "army greatly encreased, during the same "period."

And again, "In the account of the issues "to the officers in the four departments, we "find that the warrants issued to the Quar- "ter-master's-general, since the 16th July, "1780, and to the Barrack-master's-general "since the 29th June, 1780, and to the "Commissaries-general, since the 25th of "May, 1778, have been all temporary, for "sums on account; and that no final war-

"rant

"rant has been granted ſince thoſe ſeveral "periods. So that theſe ſums have been "iſſued, without even the ceremony of a "quarterly abſtract, and the confidential re-"liance on the officer, that his vouchers are "forth-coming."

I arrived in London many days before the Commiſſioners of Accounts delivered in their Seventh Report to the Houſe of Commons. Had thoſe Gentlemen called upon me, as they did on Sir William Howe, and Lord Cornwallis; had they examined certain officers of the different departments, who arrived in England at the time I did, and who announced themſelves to them; and had they read all the Reports of the different Boards of General Officers and Magiſtrates, that had been appointed by me at New York, to enquire into the expenditure of public money, (all which Reports had been ſent to the Lords Commiſſioners of the Treaſury many months before) I am perſuaded that their

Report would not have appeared on the table of the Houſe of Commons in the ſhape it has done. For when they were informed (as they would have been by the means juſt ſtated) that all the rum purchaſed for the ſupply of the army during the whole period of my command, was paid for in America by my warrants, whereas before then it uſed to be paid for in England; that conſiderable ſums of money were paid on my warrants for expences incurred during the command of my predeceſſor, which could not be brought to account ſooner; that proviſions to a very conſiderable amount were purchaſed in America, and paid for in Ametica on my warrants, for the ſupply of the army, which might otherwiſe have been expoſed to the greateſt diſtreſs; all which together amounted to nearly 1,500,000l. and that the increaſe of poſts, during my command, at Savannah, Charles-Town, Cape Fear, Portſmouth, Penobſcot, &c. requiring each their

reſpective eſtabliſhment, added of courſe to the extraordinaries of my army; and that, beſides theſe, and many others which I could enumerate, the peculiar circumſtances of my command expoſed me to many expences unknown to my predeceſſor; it is preſumed, thoſe Gentlemen would have admitted, that the increaſe of the iſſues for the extraordinary ſervices of the army under my command, was accounted for. This matter, however, went, by my deſire, through a very full and formal inveſtigation, in Auguſt 1781, before a Board of General Officers and Magiſtrates (of which Lieutenant-general Robertſon was Preſident) under the title of a Comparative View of Expences incurred, from the 31ſt December, 1775, to the 16th of May, 1778 (the time of Sir William Howe's command and of what was paid by me, between the 26th of May 1778, and the 31ſt of December 1780. Which produced the following Report from that Board.

" The

" The great national expence in the
" firſt period of Sir William Howe's com-
" mand, aroſe from the whole navy, and
" a very numerous fleet of tranſports, be-
" ing employed in attending the move-
" ments of the army; no part of which
" appears in Sir William Howe's warrants.

" The expence of the Quarter-maſter-
" general, Barrack-maſter-general, and En-
" gineer departments, were neceſſarily ſmall,
" while the troops were on board ſhips, or
" had their ſupplies from tranſports.

" During part of the firſt period, the
" great article of expence, *rum*, was pro-
" vided for by a contract made in Eng-
" land, and paid for there. Whereas, du-
" ring the ſecond period, the rum was pur-
" chaſed by the Commiſſary-general, and
" paid for by the Commander in Chief's
" warrants. A very large quantity of pro-
" viſions purchaſed alſo, during the latter
" period, ſwells the amount of the warrants.

" But

" But what deſtroys a poſſibility of draw-
" ing any juſt concluſion from a compariſon
" of the amount of the warrants in theſe
" two periods, ariſes from this; that a great
" part of the expence incurred by Sir Wil-
" liam Howe, was paid by warrants granted
" by Sir Henry Clinton."

This Report having been regularly tranſmitted to the Treaſury, I muſt ſuppoſe it was laid before the Commiſſioners of Accounts. Had it been read by thoſe Gentlemen, it is preſumable it would have, at leaſt, accompanied theirs.

With regard to the ſecond obſervation alluded to, reſpecting my not granting final warrants to certain departments from certain periods; if the Commiſſioners had read all the above papers, I think it would have occurred to them; that as a Commiſſary of Accounts had been commiſſioned, and was actually employed in auditing the accounts of the different departments, I could not, with pro-

propriety, grant final warrants to any of the departments upon their quarterly abſtracts (as had been before practiſed) until their accounts had been firſt audited and certified by the Commiſſary.

As to the mode of ſupply which I found eſtabliſhed, when I ſucceeded to the command of the army in North America, and which I underſtood had been approved by Government, I certainly could not, in prudence, have made any alterations or reduction in it, as long as I had offenſive operation in view. The inſtant, however, that I received orders to place the army upon a ſtrict defenſive, I propoſed ſuch a reduction as could take place. And when I obtained his Majeſty's permiſſion to reſign the command, I recommended it to General Robertſon, who was appointed to ſucceed me.

"H. CLINTON."

APPENDIX.

NUMBER I.

Extract of a Letter from Lord George Germain to Sir Henry Clinton, dated May 2, 1781.

"CONCEIVING therefore so highly as I do of the importance of the Southern provinces, and of the vast advantages which must attend the profecution of the war upon the preſent plan of extending our conqueſts from ſouth to north; it was a great mortification to me to find, by your inſtructions to Major-General Phillips, that it appeared to be your intention that only a part of the troops he carried with him ſhould remain in the Cheſa-

peak; and that he and General Arnold ſhould return to New-York, leaving only a ſufficient force to ſerve for garriſons in the poſts they might eſtabliſh in Virginia. Your ideas, therefore, of the importance of recovering that province appearing to be ſo different from mine, I thought it proper to aſk the advice of his Majeſty's other ſervants upon the ſubject; and their opinions concurring entirely with mine, it has been ſubmitted to the King; and I am commanded by his Majeſty to acquaint you that the recovery of the Southern Provinces and the proſecution of the war, by puſhing our conqueſts from ſouth to north, is to be conſidered as the chief and principal object for the employment of all the forces under your command, which can be ſpared from the defence of the places in his Majeſty's poſſeſſion, until it is accompliſhed, &c.

"The three regiments from Ireland, and the Britiſh recruits that went with them, are, I truſt,

I truſt, well on their way by this time to Charles-Town; and as Sir George Rodney will bring you three more regiments from the Leeward Iſlands before the hurricane months, the augmentation of your force muſt, I ſhould think, be equal to the utmoſt of your wiſhes.

NUMBER II.

Extract of a Letter from Lord George Germain to Sir Henry Clinton, dated June 6, 1781.

"I SHALL therefore only obſerve in addition to all I have hitherto written upon the ſubject, that I am well pleaſed to find Lord Cornwallis's opinion entirely coincides with mine of the great importance of puſhing the war on the ſide of Virginia with all the force that can be ſpared, until that province is reduced."

NUMBER III.

Copy of a Letter from Rear-Admiral Sir S. Hood to Sir H. Clinton, dated off Cape Henry, August 25, 1781.

"SIR,

"HEREWITH you will receive a duplicate of the letter I had the honour to write you by Lieut. Delanoe of the Active brig, in case any misfortune should have befallen her in returning to New-York. I am now steering for Cape Henry, in order to examine the Chesapeak. From thence I shall proceed to the Capes of the Delaware; and not seeing, or hearing any thing of De Grasse, or any detachment of ships he might have sent upon this coast, shall then make the best of my way off Sandy Hook. This I have communicated to Rear-Admiral Graves, in order that he may determine my anchoring or not, as the King's service may require.

"I have

"I have the honour to send you my line of battle, by which you will see the number and force of his Majesty's squadron under my command; and, I trust, you will think it equal, fully to defeat any designs of the enemy, let De Grasse bring or send what ships he may, in aid to those under De Barras.

"I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) "SAM. HOOD."

NUMBER IV.

Copy of a Letter from General Washington to Count De Grasse, dated Williamsburg, September 26, 1781.

"I AM unable to describe to your Excellency the painful anxiety under which I have laboured since the reception of the letter you did me the honour to write me of the 23d instant. The motions of the naval force under your command, which your Excellency says may possibly happen, since the information

communicated

communicated to you by the Baron de Clozen, obliges me to point out the conſequences that may follow; and warmly to urge a perſeverance in the plan agreed upon between us. Permit me, in the firſt place, to repeat to your Excellency, that the attempt upon York, under the protection of your ſhipping, is as certain of ſucceſs as a ſuperior force and a ſuperiority of meaſures can render any military operation; that the duration of the ſiege may be exactly aſcertained; and that the capture of the Britiſh army is a matter ſo important in itſelf, and in its conſequences, that it muſt greatly tend to bring an end to the war, and put our allied arms in certain poſſeſſion of the moſt ineſtimable advantages.

"If your Excellency quits the Bay, an acceſs is open to relieve York, of which the enemy will inſtantly avail themſelves. The conſequences of this will be not only the diſgrace of abandoning a deſign on which are founded the faireſt hopes of the allied forces,

after

after a prodigious expence, fatigue, and exertions; but the probable disbanding of the whole army; for the present seat of war being such as absolutely precludes the use of waggons, from the great number of large rivers which intersect the country; there will be a total want of provisions, unless this inconvenience is remedied by water carriage. This province has been so exhausted by the ravages of the enemy, and by the support already given to our forces, that subsistence must be drawn from a distance; and that can be done only by a fleet superior in the Bay.

"I earnestly beg your Excellency would consider, that if, by moving your fleet from the situation agreed on, we lose the present opportunity, we shall never hereafter have it in our power to strike so decisive a stroke, that the British will labour without intermission to fortify a place so useful to their shipping; and that then the period of an honourable peace will be farther distant than ever.

"The

"The confidence I have in your Excellency's manly ſpirit and naval talents leaves me no doubt that the conſideration of the conſequences that muſt follow your departure from the Bay will determine you to uſe all poſſible means for the good of the common cauſe. From the aſſurances of the moſt expert ſailors, I am perſuaded that your Excellency may take ſuch a poſition in the Bay as to leave nothing to be apprehended from an attempt of the Engliſh fleet; that this poſition will at the ſame time facilitate the operations of the ſiege, ſecure the tranſportation of our proviſions by water, and accellerate our approaches by landing our heavy artillery and warlike neceſſaries in York River almoſt cloſe to our trenches.

"The force ſaid to have arrived under Admiral Digby, as the news comes from the Britiſh themſelves, may not only be exaggerated, but perhaps abſolutely falſe; but ſuppoſing it to be true, their whole force united cannot be ſuch as to give them any hopes of ſucceſs

ceſs in the attacking your fleet. If the poſition for your ſhips to lie at an anchor, which we agreed upon, has ſince appeared impracticable, there is ſtill another meaſure may be adopted; which, though much inferior as to the ſecurity and facility it will give to our land operations, may ſtill be of advantage to our affairs. The meaſure, I mean, is to cruiſe off the Bay, ſo as to keep the Capes always in ſight, and to prevent any Engliſh veſſels getting in.

"Whatever plan you may adopt, I am to preſs your Excellency to perſevere in the ſcheme ſo happily concerted between us; but if you ſhould find inſurmountable obſtacles in the way; let me ultimately beg of you not to relinquiſh the laſt mentioned alternative of preventing all veſſels from the enemy entering the Bay of Chelapeak.

"The Britiſh Admiral may manœuvre his fleet, and endeavour to draw you from the main object we have in view; but I can

never believe, that he will ſeriouſly wiſh to bring on a general action with a fleet, whoſe force, I will anſwer for it, is ſuperior to the moſt exaggerated accounts we have of theirs. Paſſed experience has taught them not to hazard themſelves with equal numbers; and has drawn from them, though unwillingly, the moſt reſpectful opinions of their enemy.

"Permit me to add that the abſence of your fleet from the Bay may fruſtrate our deſign upon the garriſon at York. For in the preſent ſituation of matters, Lord Cornwallis might evacuate the place with the loſs of his artillery, baggage, and a few men, ſacrifices; which would be highly juſtifiable from the deſire of ſaving the body of the army.

"The Marquis de la Fayette, who does me the honour to carry this letter to your Excellency, will explain to you better than any other perſon, or than I can do by letter, many particulars of our preſent poſition. Your Excellency is acquainted with his candour and

talents,

talents, which entitles him to your confidence. I have ordered him not to paſs the Cape for fear of accident, in caſe you ſhould be at ſea. If this be ſo, he will incloſe this diſpatch in a letter from himſelf,

"I have the honour, &c.

"G. WASHINGTON."

NUMBER V.

Extract from Lord George Germain's Letter to Sir Henry Clinton, dated October 12, 1781.

"IT is a great ſatisfaction to me to find your ideas of the importance of ſecuring a naval ſtation in the Cheſapeak capable of giving protection to the King's ſhips, appointed to intercept the navigation of that Bay, ſo entirely coincided with my own; and that the plan you had concerted for conducting the military operations in that quarter correſponds

with what I had ſuggeſted in my former letters to you on that ſubject. I truſt, therefore, that Lord Cornwallis will retain the whole of the troops you ſo very properly ſpared for the ſervice in the Cheſapeak; or if he has ſent you any part, that you will return them to him. And as ſoon as the heats are abated, tranſport a ſtrong detachment to Baltimore, &c.

"The proviſion you made for the ſouthern ſervice was certainly moſt ample. And I have always conſidered and ſpoke of it as a circumſtance highly to your honour; and as an evidence of your being actuated by the pureſt zeal for the public ſervice. And though I lament exceedingly that from a concurrence of untoward events, the ſucceſs was not equal to the ſanguine expectations I had entertained, I never imputed any part of the diſappointment to a deficiency in your ſupplies."

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NUMBER VI.

Extract from Sir Henry Clinton's Letter to Rear Admiral Graves, dated Auguſt 16, 1781.

"I CANNOT ſay I credit the reports of the French being upon the coaſt. Should they prove falſe, and there was little probability of their coming for a week or ten days, I think thoſe could not be better employed than in a viſit to Rhode-Iſland. The recruits I have lately received enable me to make this offer, whenever you think it prudent to attempt it. If you determine, I requeſt that Captain Duncan may direct the water-movements of the army."

Extract from Sir Henry Clinton's Letter to Rear-Admiral Graves, dated Auguſt 18, 1781.

"WHENEVER, Sir, you think the fleet under your command is in number and ſtate

equal to the undertaking, and you will give me twenty-four hours notice, every thing ſhall be immediately embarked; and I ſhall with pleaſure accompany you myſelf on it."

NUMBER VII.

Extracts from Rear-Admiral Graves's Letters to Sir H. Clinton, dated 18 and 21 Auguſt, 1781.

"IN anſwer to your propoſition, I can only aſſure you by letter, what I had the honour to declare in perſon, that I am ready to concur with your Excellency in any enterprize where you found a probability of ſucceſs; and that I would riſk the ſquadron whenever you thought it adviſeable to riſk the army.

"The Robuſte is ſo leaky, I am forced to ſend her to the yard for reparation; and I ſuſpect that her guns and heavy furniture muſt be taken out to enable the ſhipwrights to examine

examine as much of her bottom as poſſible. Whilſt that is doing, the Prudent will change one of her maſts, if not two. By this ſtate you will ſee our naval capacity.

Aug. 21, 1781. How ſoon the Robuſte will be ready is yet impoſſible to form a judgement upon, as we cannot yet learn the extent of her defects. The Prudent will, I am confident, be ready in much leſs time; and ſo will all the other ſhips, I have not a doubt.

"Your Excellency may reſt aſſured that timely notice ſhall be given, and as early as poſſible to determine upon the day the ſquadron will be fit to act; for I would not wiſh that a ſingle day ſhould be loſt."

NUMBER VIII.

Extract from Lord Cornwallis's Letter to Sir H. Clinton. York Town, Virginia, 20 October, 1781.

"I HAVE the mortification to inform your Excellency, that I have been forced to

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give up the posts of York and Gloucester, and to surrender the troops under my command by capitulation, on the 19th instant, as prisoners of war to the combined forces of America and France.

I never saw this post in a favourable light. But, when I found I was to be attacked in it, in so unprepared a state, by so powerful an army and artillery, nothing but the hopes of relief would have induced me to attempt its defence. For I would either have endeavoured to escape to New York, by rapid marches from the Gloucester side, immediately on the arrival of General Washington's troops at Williamsburg; or I would, notwithstanding the disparity of numbers, have attacked them in the open field, where it might have been just possible that Fortune would have favoured the gallantry of the handful of troops under my command. But, being assured by your Excellency's letters that every possible means would be tried, by the navy

and

and army, to relieve us, I could not think myself at liberty to venture on either of those desperate attempts. Therefore, after remaining two days in a strong position, in front of this place, in hopes of being attacked, upon observing that the enemy were taking measures which could not fail of turning my left flank in a short time; and receiving, the second evening, your letter of the 24th September, informing me, that the relief would fail about the 5th of October, I withdrew within the works on the night of the 29th of September, hoping, by the labour and firmness of the troops, to protract the defence until you could arrive. Every thing was to be expected from the firmness of the troops. But every disadvantage attended their labour; as the works were to be continued under the enemy's fire; and our stock of entrenching-tools, which did not much exceed four hundred when we began to work, in the latter end of August, was now much diminished.

A successful defence, however, in that situation, was perhaps impossible; for the place could only be reckoned an intrenched camp, subject in most places to enfilade; and the ground in general so disadvantageous, that nothing but the necessity of fortifying it as a post to protect the navy could have induced any person to erect works upon it."

Copy of a Letter from Sir Henry Clinton to Earl Cornwallis, dated November 30, 1781.

[This letter was not produced in the House of Lords.]

"My Lord,

"AFTER the conversation I had with your Lordship before I sent your letter to be published, in which we seemed so perfectly to agree, I must beg your Lordship's pardon for again troubling you on the subject. But being informed, perhaps officiously, that some people here suppose there are passages in that

that letter which convey an idea that you had been compelled by my orders to take the poſt of York, (though it was not your own preference;) that you had repreſented the defects of the ground; and were detained there contrary to your own judgment; and likewiſe that I had promiſed the exertions of the navy before my letter of the 24th of September: I am perſuaded your Lordſhip will readily excuſe my requeſting a more formal avowal of your ſentiments, leſt I ſhould have them miſtaken them. Becauſe, if that ſhould unfortunately be the caſe, I may perhaps be under the neceſſity of taking meaſures to obviate your letter being viewed in the ſame light in England.

"I have the honour, &c.

"H. CLINTON."

NUMBER IX.

Copy of Earl Cornwallis's Letter to Sir Henry Clinton, dated New York, 2d December, 1781.

[This Letter was read in the House of Lords.]

"SIR,

"YESTERDAY afternoon I was honoured with your Excellency's letter of the 30th of November.

"I do not recollect that any converſation paſſed between us the other day, before the publication of my letter, relative to my reaſons for taking poſſeſſion of the poſts of York and Glouceſter. But, in my anſwers to your diſpatches, dated the 8th and 11th of July, directing me ſo poſitively to poſſeſs a harbour in the Cheſapeak for line of battle ſhips, your Excellency will ſee, that, after finding that works on Point Comfort could not protect a

naval force in Hampton Road, I thought that I acted in ſtrict obedience to your orders by taking poſſeſſion of thoſe poſts. I thought it unneceſſary to enter into a minute detail of the diſadvantages of the ground, either on my firſt examination of it in the month of June, or on my return to it in Auguſt; becauſe, on the firſt occaſion, as I have already had the honour of explaining to your Excellency, I did not, after ſeeing it, entertain for a moment an idea of occupying it, not thinking myſelf at liberty, by the inſtructions under which I then acted, to detain the greater part of the force in Virginia for the purpoſe of ſecuring a harbour for ſhips of the line; and, on my return to it in Auguſt, I thought it then became my duty to make the beſt of it I could, having no other harbour to propoſe in its place.

In regard to the promiſe of the exertions of the navy previous to your letter of the 24th of September, I can only repeat what I had

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the honour of saying to your Excellency in the conversation to which you allude; that without any particular engagement for the navy before that date, all your letters held out uniformly hopes of relief; and that I had no reason, from any of them, to suppose that you had lost sight of the possibility of effecting it. And that, under those hopes, after serious reflection, I did not think that it would have been justifiable in me to abandon those posts, with our numerous sick, artillery, stores, and shipping; or to risk an action, which, in all probability, would, in its consequences, have precipitated the loss of them.

"My letter from York, dated the 20th of October, was written under great agitation of mind and in great hurry, being constantly interrupted by numbers of people coming upon business or ceremony. But my intention in writing that letter was to explain the motives that influenced my own conduct, and to mo-

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rate the incidents that preceded the extremity that forced us to surrender.

"I have the honour, &c.

"CORNWALLIS."

NUMBER IX.

Copy of a Letter from Sir Henry Clinton to Earl Cornwallis, dated New York, 2d and 10th of December, 1781.

[This Letter was not read in the House of Lords.]

"My Lord,

"AS your Lordship is pleased, in your letter of this day, to revert to the circumstance of your quitting Williamsburg Neck, and repassing the James River, so contrary to the intentions I wished to express in my letters of the 11th and 15th of June, and those referred to by them, and which I thought they would have clearly explained. Your Lordship will, I hope, forgive me, if I once more repeat that I am of opinion, if those

letters

letter had been properly understood by your Lordship, you would at least have hesitated before you adopted that measure. For I humbly presume it will appear, upon a re-perusal of them, that it was my desire to recommend to your Lordship the taking a healthy defensive station, either at Williamsburg or York; and, after keeping what troops you might want for the ample defence of such a post, and desultory movements by water, to send me such a proportion of the corps (mentioned in a list) as you could spare, taking them in the succession they are there placed. Your Lordship, on the contrary, understood these as conveying a positive order to send me three thousand men, (by which you say your force would have been reduced to about two thousand four hundred rank and file fit for duty; having, it is presumed, above 1500 sick;) and was pleased to tell me, in your answer, that you could not, consistent with my plans, make safe defensive

posts

posts at York and Gloucester, (both of which would be necessary for the protection of shipping;) and that you should immediately pass James River, and take measures for complying with my requisition.

"I own, my Lord, that my opinion of the obvious meaning of the letters referred to, continues still the same; and I am exceedingly sorry to find, by the letter you have now honoured me with, that it differs so widely from your Lordship's. It is plain, however, we cannot both be in the right.

"My letter of the 11th of July directs your Lordship to fortify Old Point Comfort, in the mouth of James River, with the intention of securing Hampton Road, which the Admiral recommended as the best naval station, and requested I would occupy. But your Lordship's letter of the 27th of July informs me, you had examined Old Point Comfort, with the officers of the navy, and the engineers, and that you were all of opinion, a post

there would not answer the purpose; and that you should, therefore, in compliance with the *spirit* of my orders, seize York and Gloucester, being the only harbour in which you could hope to be able to give *effectual protection* to line of battle ships. Supposing, therefore, of course, that your Lordship approved, in every respect, of York and Gloucester, from the preference you had thus given them to the post I had recommended, I did not oppose the choice you had made; having never received the least hint from your Lordship that the *ground* of York was unfavourable, or liable to be enfiladed till after you had capitulated.

"With respect to your Lordship's having been influenced in your conduct, by the hopes of relief, (which you say was uniformly held out to you in all my letters) your Lordship cannot be insensible, that the possibility of effecting it must have entirely depended upon the exertions of the navy; which, as I was

not

not authorised to promise before the 24th of September, I am perſuaded your Lordſhip will readily acknowledge, that if your letter of the 20th October implies I had done ſo before that period, the implication cannot be ſupported by any thing I wrote previous to my letter of that date, which you received on the 29th.

"As, therefore, my letters of the 2d and 6th of September, which promiſe only my own exertions, did not reach your Lordſhip before the 13th and 14th of that month, and you did not before then know of Sir Samuel Hood's arrival, or of Mr. Graves's having more than ſeven ſail of the line to combat Monſieur De Graſſe's force, which on the 29th of Auguſt you had heard conſiſted of at leaſt twenty-five ſail of the line; your Lordſhip conſequently could have no hopes of relief before that time. And with reſpect to your eſcape to New-York, immediately on the arrival of General Waſhington's troops at

Williamsburg, which your letter of the 20th of October implies you were prevented from undertaking, by the receipt of mine of the 24th of September; I must beg leave to observe, that if it had been ever practicable after the time your Lordship mentions (which I am free to own I do not think it was) it must have been between that period and the time of the enemy's force appearing before your lines. It may, therefore, be presumed, you could not have been prevented by any thing I said in that letter, as you did not receive it until after the latter event took place. But I readily admit, my Lord, that none of my letters could give you the least reason to suppose that an attempt would not be made to succour you.

"Your Lordship will, I am persuaded, also forgive me, if I again take notice of the too positive manner in which you are pleased to speak of the opinion I gave you about the sailing of the fleet; as my words were, "there

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"is every reason to hope we shall start from "hence about the 5th of October." And in my letter of the next day, for fear that should appear too positive, I say, "It is sup- "posed the necessary repairs of the fleet will "detain us here to the 5th of next month; "and your Lordship must be sensible that "unforeseen accidents may lengthen it out "a day or two longer."

With regard to entrenching tools, the want of which your Lordship so much complains of, I can only say, that by the returns made to me by the Adjutant-general, it appears that two thousand five hundred had been sent to the Chesapeak by the Engineer, since General Arnold's expedition, inclusive; and that the first moment a requisition was made for more, (which was not before the 23d of August) I ordered an additional supply to be sent, which were prevented from going by the arrival of the French fleet. I own, however, that I was not at that time very uneasy

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on this score, as I supposed it possible for your Lordship to have collected a sufficiency from the neighbouring plantations any time before the investiture was begun.

"December 10.——I had wrote thus far, my Lord, immediately after the receipt of your Lordship's letter of the 2d instant. But considering that it was possible you might not have adverted to the implications which your letter of the 20th of October may be thought to bear, from the great agitation of mind and hurry in which you tell me it was written, I was unwilling to give you at that time more trouble on the subject;—in the honest hope that your Lordship's candour will induce you most formally to disavow your having any such intentions by writing that letter, in case you find, on your arrival in England, that the passages of it (which I have taken notice of) are understood as I suspect they may be. And I therefore intended to have sent this letter to a friend, to be delivered to you in

London; but upon conſidering your letter of the 2d inſtant, (which I have had more leiſure to do ſince my public diſpatches were cloſed) I am of opinion, that it is properer your Lordſhip ſhould receive my anſwer to it here.

"I have the honour, &c.

(Signed) "H. CLINTON.

"P. S. Having forgot to ſpeak to the part of your Lordſhip's letter of the 2d inſtant, where you ſay, 'I do not recollect that any 'converſation paſſed between us the other day, 'before the publication of my letter, relative 'to my reaſons for taking poſſeſſion of the 'poſts of York and Glouceſter,' I beg leave to do it here.

"It is true, my Lord, no converſation paſſed from your Lordſhip on that ſubject. But when, in the converſation alluded to, I mentioned that I had directed you to examine Old Point Comfort, and fortify it, but that, diſapproving of that poſt, you had ſeized York,

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and that therefore York was your Lordſhip's preference; as you were pleaſed not to make me any anſwer, I took it for granted you agreed with me.

"H. CLINTON."

"Lieutenant-general
"Earl Cornwallis."

NUMBER IX.

Extract of a Letter from Sir Henry Clinton to Lord George Germain, dated December 3, 1781.

[This Letter was not read in the Houſe of Lords.]

"YOUR Lordſhip will have received in my diſpatch, No. 146. the copies of Lord Cornwallis's letter to me of the 20th of October, his capitulation for the poſts of York and Glouceſter, and the other papers which accompanied it. But your Lordſhip will perceive, that I declined making any remarks upon his letter until I ſaw his Lordſhip; knowing that my whole correſpondence with him being in your Lordſhip's poſſeſſion, every thing which wanted explanation could readily

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be cleared up. His Lordſhip having arrived here on the 19th ultimo, I have had ſeveral converſations with him; and I have now the honour to incloſe for your Lordſhip's information, the copy of a letter I wrote to him on the ſubject, with his Lordſhip's anſwer.

"I perceive by Lord Cornwallis's letter of the 20th of October, that his opinion of the poſt of York is very unfavourable; and he ſince tells me, that he does not think the enemy will be able to make a ſtrong one of it. Had his Lordſhip, however, not been ſo very decided in his ſentiments of the poſt, all the accounts I had ever before received of the ſituation and defenſibility of the ground would, I confeſs, have inclined me to have thought well of it."

NUMBER IX.

Copy of a Letter from Sir Henry Clinton to Lord George Germain, dated December 6, 1781.

[This Letter was not read in the Houſe of Lords.]

"My Lord,

"I have ſo often had the honour of delivering the ſame ſentiments to your Lordſhip, that I muſt beg your pardon for again troubling you with the repetition, that I have ever been of opinion that operation ſhould not be undertaken in the Cheſapeak, without having a naval ſuperiority in theſe ſeas: and to the want of it, and perhaps to that alone, are we to impute our late misfortune in that quarter. Therefore, when I did myſelf the honour of ſending you a copy of Lord Cornwallis's letter to me of the 20th of October, I did not think it neceſſary to trouble your Lordſhip with any remarks upon ſome paſſages of it, which might ſeem to imply, that his Lord-

ſhip had been forced into a bad poſt by my orders, notwithſtanding he had repreſented its defects, and had been induced to remain there contrary to his judgment, by the poſitive aſſurances I had given him of relief; eſpecially as your Lordſhip was poſſeſſed of our correſpondence, which could in the fulleſt manner invalidate every implication of that ſort, and I wiſhed to have an opportunity of ſpeaking to Lord Corwallis, before I ſaid any thing on ſo delicate a ſubject.

"Since Lord Cornwallis's arrival here, I have had a good deal of converſation with his Lordſhip upon this buſineſs, by which, and by the anſwer he has ſent me to a letter I wrote him thereon, (copies of which are incloſed) it appears, that his Lordſhip admits this was not the caſe. But as Lord Cornwallis's diſavowal is not ſo explicit and direct in his letter as I could wiſh, and I think juſtice to my character requires, I beg your Lordſhip's attention to the following obſervations;

which I hope the anxiety I muſt naturally feel on this occaſion, will plead my excuſe for troubling you with; though they may not be neceſſary to vindicate me with your Lordſhip, who is already ſo competent to judge.

"I am perſuaded that it will appear by my letters to Lord Cornwallis of the 11th and 15th of June, and thoſe referred to by them, that I recommended his taking a healthy, defenſive ſtation, either at Williamſburg, or York; and deſired that, after keeping what troops he might want for its moſt ample defence and deſultory movements by water, his Lordſhip would ſend me ſuch a proportion of the corps (mentioned in a liſt,) as he could ſpare, taking them in the ſucceſſion they are there placed. But his Lordſhip, on the contrary, underſtanding that theſe letters conveyed a poſitive order to ſend me three thouſand men, (by which he ſays his force would have been reduced to about

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two thouſand four hundred rank and file fit for duty, having probably at that time a numerous ſick) told me in his anſwer, that he could not, conſiſtent with my plans, make ſafe defenſive poſts at York and Glouceſter, (both which would be neceſſary for the protection of ſhipping) and that he ſhould immediately repaſs James River, and take meaſures for complying with my requiſition. Finding, therefore, that his Lordſhip had ſo entirely miſconceived my intentions, I immediately conſulted with Rear-Admiral Graves upon the ſubject of his letter; and the Admiral being of opinion, that a naval ſtation in Cheſapeak for large ſhips was abſolutely requiſite, and that Hampton Road appeared to be the fitteſt for the purpoſe I deſired his Lordſhip, at the Admiral's requeſt, to examine Old Point Comfort, in the mouth of James River, and fortify it, upon the ſuppoſition that a work there would ſecure that

harbour;

harbour; and if his Lordſhip thought a poſt at York neceſſary to cover Old Point Comfort, he was at liberty to take that alſo. This order was ſent to Lord Cornwallis in my letter of the 11th of July, and his Lordſhip's anſwer to it is dated the 27th; wherein he informs me, that having examined Old Point Comfort, with the Captains of the King's ſhips and the Engineers, and being all of opinion a poſt there would not anſwer the purpoſe, he ſhould in compliance with the ſpirit of my orders, ſeize York and Glouceſter, being the only harbour in which he could hope to be able to give effectual protection to line of battle ſhips. Copies of theſe letters are incloſed for your Lordſhip to refer to; and I truſt it will appear from them, that the poſt at York was in this inſtance entirely his Lordſhip's choice. But never having received an repreſentation from his Lordſhip, by which I could have

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the leaſt conception he thought the ground diſadvantageous and liable to enfilade, (as ſtated in his letter of the 20th of October,) and, ſuppoſing, from the preference his Lordſhip had thus given it to the one I had recommended, that he fully approved of York and Glouceſter, I own I did not oppoſe his laying hold of them, as I could not entertain the ſmalleſt doubt of their being defenſible, and ſuch a poſt as I had told his Lordſhip I wanted. And, indeed, if his Lordſhip had not now informed me that it was a bad one, the eagerneſs with which I underſtand the French have ſince ſeized and are fortifying it, would incline me ſtill to think well of it.

"With reſpect to his Lordſhip having been influenced in his conduct by the hopes of relief, (which he is pleaſed to ſay I uniformly held out to him in all my letters) his Lordſhip could not be inſenſible that the poſ-

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ſibility of effecting it muſt have entirely depended upon the exertions of the fleet, which, as I was not authorized to promiſe him before the Council of War held on the 24th of September, I am perſuaded that the implication in his Lordſhip's letter that I had done ſo before that period, cannot be ſupported (as indeed his Lordſhip now ſeems to acknowledge) by any thing I wrote to him, previous to my letter of that date, which he received on the 29th. As, therefore, my letters of the 2d and 6th of September, which promiſe only my own exertions, did not reach his Lordſhip before the 13th and 14th of that month, and he did not before then know of Sir S. Hood's arrival, or that Admiral Graves had more than ſeven ſail of the line to combat Monſieur de Graſſe's force, whoſe arrival, it appears from his Lordſhip's letters, he knew of on the 29th of Auguſt, and ſuppoſed it to be twenty-five ſail of the line, his

his Lordſhip conſequently did not receive from me any hopes of relief before that time.

"With regard to his Lordſhip's eſcape to New York, immediately on the arrival of General Waſhington's troops at Williamſburg, which his letter of the 20th of October implies he was prevented from undertaking by the receipt of mine of the 24th of Sept. I cannot help being of opinion, that a retreat, after Mr. Waſhington joined, was impracticable, and that it was at no time to be effected to the northward, for reaſons which I gave his Lordſhip. But had it been ever poſſible, after the time his Lordſhip mentions, it muſt, I think, have been between that period and the time of the enemy's force preſenting itſelf before the lines of York; and it is conſequently preſumable, his Lordſhip was not prevented by any thing I ſaid in that letter, as he acknowledges he did not receive it until after the latter event took place. But I readily admit, my Lord, that

none of my letters could give his Lordſhip the leaſt reaſon to ſuppoſe that an attempt would not be made to ſuccour him, though, I muſt confeſs, I think his Lordſhip ſpeaks in his letter rather too poſitively of the opinion I gave in mine, as to the time of the fleet's ſailing. My words being, 'There is 'every reaſon to hope we ſhall ſtart from 'hence about the 5th of October.' And leſt even that ſhould be thought poſitive, I the next day told him, 'that unforeſeen 'accidents may lengthen it out a day or 'two longer.'

"The complaint his Lordſhip makes of the want of intrenching tools, I can only anſwer, by ſaying, that it appears from the Adjutant-general's returns to me, that two thouſand five hundred had been ſent by the engineer to the Cheſapeak with the different expeditions, ſince the one commanded by General Arnold incluſive; and the firſt moment a requiſition was made for more, (which

was not before his Lordſhip's letter of the 22d of Auguſt) I ordered an additional ſupply to be ſent, which were prevented from going by the arrival of the French fleet. But I muſt own, my Lord, that I was not then very uneaſy on this ſcore, as I flattered myſelf it was poſſible for his Lordſhip to have collected what he wanted from the neighbouring plantations any time before the inveſtiture was begun.

"No man, my Lord, can feel more ſenſibly than I did for the unhappy ſituation of Lord Cornwallis and his gallant army, whoſe meritorious conduct, ſpirit, and zeal, on all occaſions, muſt heighten our anxiety and concern for their preſent fate; and therefore as his Lordſhip is pleaſed to tell me that his letter of the 20th of October was written under great agitation of mind and in great hurry, which might poſſibly have prevented his adverting to the implications which it may be thought to bear, I cannot, at preſent,

wish to give his Lordship more trouble on the subject, although his answer of the 2d instant is not so explicitly satisfactory as I expected it would have been; for, if the passages in that letter, which I have taken notice of, should be understood in Europe in any respect to my prejudice, I cannot doubt his Lordship will have candour enough most formally to disavow his having any such intentions. But if his Lordship, contrary to my expectation, shall not be inclined to do so, I must be obliged, though reluctantly, most earnestly to request your Lordship to render me that justice, (which I am persuaded you think I deserve) by publishing this letter.

"I have the honour, &c.

"H. CLINTON."

NUMBER X.

Extract from Sir H. Clinton's Inſtructions to Major-General Phillips, dated March 10, 1781.

"IF the Admiral diſapproving of Portſmouth, and requiring a fortified ſtation for large ſhips in the Cheſapeak, ſhould propoſe York Town, or Old Point Comfort, if poſſeſſion of either can be acquired and maintained without great riſk or loſs, you are at liberty to take poſſeſſion thereof. But if the objections are ſuch as you think forcible, you muſt, after ſtating thoſe objections, decline it till ſolid operations take place in the Cheſapeak."

Extract

Extract from the Subſtance of Converſations held with General Phillips, ſent to that General Officer for his Guidance.

"BUT if the heights of York, and thoſe on the Glouceſter ſide, cannot be ſo well and ſo ſoon fortified as to render that poſt *hors d'inſult* before the enemy can move a force, &c. againſt it, it may not be adviſeable to attempt it. In that caſe ſomething may poſſibly be done at Old Point Comfort to cover large ſhips lying in Hampton road, which is reckoned a good one. If neither can be ſecured, we muſt content ourſelves with keeping the Cheſapeak, with frigates and other armed veſſels, which will always find ſecurity againſt a ſuperior naval force in Elizabeth River."

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NUMBER XI.

Extract from Sir Henry Clinton's Letters to Lord George Germain.

OCTOBER 30, 1780. "I ſhall in a few days ſend to Charles-town all the recruits belonging to the ſouthern army, which will be about eight hundred. And then, including the corps under General Leſlie, Lord Cornwallis will have full 11306 effective rank and file under his orders.

April 5th, 1781. "After the reduction of Charles-town, Lord Cornwallis informed me, that he thought the force I left with him fully competent to the defence of South, and moſt probably the reduction of North Carolina. I had, therefore, at that time no other intention (threatened as we were, by the expected arrival of a French fleet and army in Rhode-Iſland) than to ſend an expedition into Cheſapeak, merely by way of making a diverſion

diverſion in his Lordſhip's favour, until more ſolid operation might take place. Which I was in hopes that adequate reinforcements from Europe would have enabled me to undertake early in the preſent year. Events, however, notwithſtanding the very glorious exertions which were made at Camden, altered Lord Cornwallis's ſituation ſo much as to make it neceſſary for him to call the corps I had ſent to Cheſapeak with General Leſlie, (and which I had put under his Lordſhip's orders) to a nearer co-operation. Being, therefore, ſtill deſirous to ſecure a port in that Bay to cover the King's frigates which might be acting there; and at the ſame time wiſhing to give Lord Cornwallis every aſſiſtance in my power; I ſent thither another detachment, under the orders of Brigadier-general Arnold; which, though not ſo conſiderable as the former, met with the fulleſt ſucceſs, and will, I doubt not, have greatly aided the movements of the army in Caro-

ſion. General Waſhington having detached a body of troops to the ſouthward, and the French having embarked in their fleet another from their army at Rhode-iſland, with an apparent intention of interrupting our operations in Virginia, and the Carolinas; I was induced to ſend to the Cheſapeak another expedition (drawn principally from the elite of my army) under Major-general Phillips. All theſe ſeveral detachments, your Lordſhip will perceive acting, either with or in favour of Lord Cornwallis. But, as General Waſhington's letter to Mr. Harriſon (a copy of which your Lordſhip will ſee amongſt the intercepted letters incloſed) intimates, that there will be oppoſed to his Lordſhip, above two thouſand Continentals more than General Green had with him before; I am led to hope, that when his Lordſhip has eſtabliſhed himſelf in North-Carolina, a very conſiderable portion of his army may be ſpared to aſſiſt in carrying into

execution such farther operations as Lord Cornwallis may have to propose; or the whole or such part as shall be found practicable of those I had designed, and accordingly explained to Major-general Phillips, in some conversations I had with him before his departure.

"If an attempt upon the forts in the highlands shall not, on mature deliberation, be thought adviseable, and nothing else offers in this quarter; I shall probably reinforce Major-general Phillips, and direct him to carry on such operations as may most effectually favour those of Lord Cornwallis, until some plan can be determined on for the campaign. For, until I know his Lordship's success, the force he can, in consequence of it, spare from the Carolinas, and the certainty of the arrival of the six regiments intended to reinforce us, it will be impossible to decide finally upon it. Your Lordship will, however, see by the inclosed opinions, what were the operations I had

had planned for the enſuing campaign, upon the ſuppoſition, that Lord Cornwallis ſucceeded in the Carolinas, and was able to ſpare a conſiderable force from thence. With the ten thouſand men I requeſted, I ſhould not have had a doubt of ſucceſs. But in my preſent reduced ſtate and proſpects I dare not flatter myſelf with any. And if the French ſhould ſtill be reinforced, your Lordſhip will, I am perſuaded, judge our ſituation to be even critical. For, with regard to our efforts in the Cheſapeak, your Lordſhip knows how much their ſucceſs and even the ſafety of the armament there, will depend upon our having a decided naval ſuperiority in theſe ſeas. And I, therefore, cannot doubt that every precaution will be taken, to give me, at leaſt, timely notice of the contrary being likely to happen; as my ignorance of ſuch an event might be moſt fatal in its conſequences.

The reinforcement I asked for was only what I judged to be barely adequate to the services required; and I most sincerely wish it had been possible to have sent it in the full extent of numbers, and in the time I requested. However, the present reduced state of General Washington, the little probability there is, I hope, of an augmentation to the French armament, and the certainty there is, likewise hope, of the six British regiments and one thousand recruits joining me in a short time, together, with the expectation I have of Lord Cornwallis's success in Carolina enabling him to send me a considerable reinforcement from thence, render the appearances of my situation less critical. And I shall, therefore, only add, my Lord, that while the King does me the honour to trust me with the command of this army, I will employ it to the utmost of my poor abilities, for the promoting his service; taking the liberty, however, to present

(as I think it my duty) what advantages may be obtained by an additional force, and what evils may be apprehended from the want of a ſufficient one.

April 30, 1781. "Your Lordſhip will have ſeen in the paper I had the honour to ſend you in my laſt diſpatch, what force I judged would be requiſite for this ſervice. Not leſs, my Lord, than 10,000 men rank and file, fit for duty; indeed I wiſh they could be more. But the incloſed returns will ſhew your Lordſhip, that after leaving theſe poſts to their preſent garriſons, and leaving 1000 men in the poſt in Elizabeth River (ſuppoſing it may not be found neceſſary to occupy another ſtation) I ſhall not have quite 5000 men for it, unleſs the three battalions expected from the Weſt Indies arrive in proper time and condition for ſervice, or Lord Cornwallis ſhould be able to ſpare from his defenſive in Carolina (when he determines upon it) a conſiderable part

of

of the army under his immediate command; which, however, his Lordship's letter of the 10th instant, gives me no hopes of, or indeed that he will even spare me the three regiments coming from Ireland.

"With these five thousand, however, my Lord, I may possibly determine to risk, even by desultory movements, the trial of this experiment, should I find the report given me of our friends in that country properly founded. If it succeeds as fully as our sanguine friends would persuade us to hope, we may possibly be able to maintain ourselves there with a small force; but if we are in a situation to give the experiment a fair trial, and it then fails, I shall, I confess, have little hopes afterwards of re-establishing order on this continent; which I am free to own I think can never be effected without the cordial assistance of numerous friends, &c."

Inclosed

Inclosed in the above letter the following extracts from Sir Henry Clinton's letters to Major General Phillips.

April 26, 1781.

"Lord Cornwallis's arrival at Wilmington has considerably changed the complexion of our affairs to the southward; and all operations to the northward must probably give place to those in favour of his Lordship, which at present appear to require more immediate attention. I know nothing of his Lordship's situation, but what I have learnt from his letter to me of the 10th, which you have read. I had great hopes, before I received this letter, that his Lordship would have been in a condition to spare me a considerable part of his army from Carolina for the operations in Chesapeak; but you will observe from it, that instead of sending any part of his present force thither, he proposes to detain a part of the reinforcement coming from Europe for his more southern operations, even

though

though they should be defensive. I shall, therefore, take the opinions of the general officers near me, upon the present state of our affairs, and afterwards send you such a reinforcement from this army, as we may judge can be done with tolerable security to this post, at least while we remain superior at sea.

April 30, 1781. To the same. "If Lord Cornwallis proposes no operation to you soon (that is, before the month of June) and you see none that will operate for him *directly*, I think the best *indirect* one in his favour will be what you and General Arnold have proposed to me in No. 10 of your joint letter of the 18th instant. The only risk you run is from a temporary superiority of the enemy at sea; it is, however, an important move, and ought, in my opinion, to be tried, even with some risk. Give me timely information of your intended move, and if possible I will follow you into —— with such a small reinforcement as I can at the time spare.

"If

"If the next packet does not ſatisfy me in —— I ſhall probably retire and leave the command to Lord Cornwallis; to whom it will be my advice to try the only experiment that in my opinion can operate, if the one in Carolina has failed. For as to Virginia, I know none which can reduce that province in one campaign.

"As you ſeemed to think, before you received Lord Cornwallis's letter, that all direct operation in favour of his Lordſhip would ceaſe by the end of May, &c. pray let me receive General Arnold's, and your opinion as ſoon as poſſible; I confeſs I am not ſanguine; but if the experiment can be tried without any other riſk than from the enemy's ſuperiority at ſea, I ſhould wiſh to do it.

"Should Lord Cornwallis determine on a defenſive in the Carolinas, he ſurely cannot want any of the European reinforcement, and will, of courſe, ſend it to you, and all ſuch other as ſhall arrive; thus reinforced, if

after leaving a sufficient garrison in Elizabeth River, you can proceed to ——— I think we shall be in force to give this a fair trial; and I may leave you in the command there, unless things should take a more favourable turn in the Carolinas, and Lord Cornwallis's presence there be no longer necessary. For until they do, I should imagine he will not quit them.

N. B. These two letters, with other dispatches, fell into Lord Cornwallis's hands on General Phillips's death, and were opened by his Lordship; and the expedition therein proposed recommended to his consideration.

NUMBER XII.

Extracts from Sir Henry Clinton's Letters to Lord George Germain.

May 20, 1781.

"BUT should Lord Cornwallis persist in his intention of joining Major-general Phillips, as mentioned in his letter to that General

neral Officer, I ſhall be under ſome apprehenſions for every part of South Carolina, except Charles-town, and even for Georgia, unleſs the ſpeedy arrival of the reinforcement expected from Europe, may enable the officer, commanding in South Carolina, to take poſt in force in ſome healthy ſtation in the back country.

"May 22. Notwithſtanding the purport of theſe letters, I am yet in hopes, from Lord Cornwallis's letter to me of the 24th, that his Lordſhip will not perſiſt in attempting a junction with Major-general Phillips, as I am apprehenſive it may be attended with ſome riſk, not only to his own corps, but to that of General Phillips, ſhould that General Officer not have been joined in time by the reinforcement I have ſent him. And I even have my doubts whether his Lordſhip's march to the northward will draw after him, as he expects, the rebel General Green; who, I fear, will endeavour either to inveſt

Camden, or, by ſtationing himſelf between that place and Charles-town, render Lord Rawdon's ſituation very hazardous. I am therefore induced to flatter myſelf, that Lord Cornwallis, when he hears of Lord Rawdon's ſucceſs againſt Green, will rather march into South Carolina, either by the direct route of Croſs Creek and Camden, or by that of George-town; or even by embarkation, though he ſhould be obliged to leave his cavalry behind until veſſels can be ſent for them, than attempt the propoſed junction with General Phillips in the way he mentions; which I muſt freely own appears to me, for the reaſons I have ſtated, not only dangerous to both corps in the attempt, but replete with the worſt conſequences to our ſouthern Provinces in their preſent ſtate."

NUMBER XIII.

Extracts from Sir Henry Clinton's Letters to Lord George Germain.

July 18, 1781. "The extracts from my correſpondence with Earl Cornwallis, which I have had the honour to tranſmit from time to time to your Lordſhip, will ſhew, that I left in Carolina a very fair proportion of my army, and ſuch as his Lordſhip thought ſufficient to ſecure South, and recover North Carolina. With what was left for me to act with in this quarter, I took the field immediately upon my arrival here. General Leſlie's expedition to the Cheſapeak took place afterwards; and ſome unfortunate events in Carolina calling for ſtill farther reinforcement and co-operation, ſoon reduced this part of my army to a defenſive, almoſt as low in numbers as Sir William Howe left me in 1777. If our ſucceſſes, therefore, in the ſouthern Provinces

have not answered your Lordship's expectations, it cannot, I am certain, be imputed either to the smallness of the numbers I left there, or the tardiness or scantiness with which I have since supplied the exigencies of that service. Though I am strongly impressed with the importance of recovering Virginia, I fear the entire reduction of so populous a province is not to be expected from an operation solely there; unless our friends in it were more numerous, and were heartily inclined to assist us not only in conquering, but in keeping it.

July 25. "No man, my Lord, laments more sincerely than I do, the long continuance of the westerly winds, which prevented the sailing of the Warwick's convoy; and I hope your Lordship will pardon me for again repeating, that had the reinforcement sailed as early as was promised, and the three battalions not been detained in the West Indies, I should

perhaps

perhaps by this time have made such movements as would have obliged the enemy to be apprehensive for their own possessions, instead of meditating the attack which they now threaten against this post."

August 9. "I am entirely of your Lordship's sentiments with respect to Lord Cornwallis having done as much in North Carolina as could have been effected with his force. But I have to lament the causes which reduced it so low in number; and that his Lordship was induced to persist in his plan, after it became obvious that he was not able to establish himself there, and support and arm the Loyalists, which were the objects of his march into the heart of that province."

From Lord Cornwallis's former letters, I had every reason to suppose he thought himself in sufficient strength to command the success he hoped for. Had his Lordship, however, upon Lieutenant-colonel Tarleton's misfortune, called upon me for a reinforcement,

or

or had I even known it in time, I am
your Lordship will do me the
knowledge, that it was absolutely
power to assist him more than I did,
when it is considered, that at this
Lordship has acting with him,
different posts under his command,
British, eight German, and fourteen
cial battalions, besides detachments
British battalions, and Ingers, artillery
cavalry; whilst in my present
ation, I have (through my
support his operations) left myself
British, eleven German, and four
battalions, besides artillery and
those in this quarter.

THE END.